



31st Annual Report 2015–2016

IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S
SPEAKOUT ASSOCIATION OF NSW





Who is Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW?

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW (IWSA) is a key women's organisation which values and acknowledges the cultural and linguistic, multigenerational diversity of migrant and refugee women. It is an organisation that empowers these women to achieve gender equality in all areas of their lives. IWSA provides education, information and other direct services to women of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB)/Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds in NSW.

IWSA represents the issues and ideas of migrant and refugee women to all levels of government, in the community services and industrial sectors, and to the media.

SpeakOut is an independent advocate representing the issues and ideas of immigrant and refugee women at all levels of government, in community services and industrial sectors, and to the media.

SpeakOut hopes to create and sustain lasting change by:

- Giving women the tools and confidence to achieve complete political, social, and economic autonomy,
- Creating awareness of the issues that face our clients and their communities through policy research and advocacy, consultation groups, and training programs,
- Educating and protecting immigrant and refugee women who want to live free from domestic and family violence, and
- Providing a forum and opportunity for these women to have their voices heard.

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Chairperson's Report

Chairperson: VIVI GERMANOS-KOUTSOUNADIS

I present to you the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association's (IWSA) Annual Report for the year 2015-2016. The IWSA for 34 years has successfully assisted CALD women and their children who experience domestic and family violence. IWSA advocates for CALD women's rights and presents information on the needs of CALD women to the government. IWSA called on the government to include in their policies, planning and allocation of resources to ensure that CALD women's needs for housing and refuges are met. CALD women need to be assured that there are women's refuges they can go to and be able to escape the abusive situation. It is very important for CALD women to know there are specialist women's community organizations, which are providing support services for them.

The Shelter and Older CALD Women's Rights

The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association brings you the good news that we have established the Multicultural Women's Shelter (MWS) - a women's shelter for CALD women without children who are escaping domestic and family violence. The MWS is IWSA's key response to the issue of CALD women escaping domestic and family violence. In 2015-2016 IWSA service provision, there were more 30 CALD women without children who were couch-surfing. The MWS will be a welcome reprieve for CALD women who have been subjected to exploitation and oppression, and also for the host families who provide a couch for them to sleep on at night.

We would like to thank Dr Geoff Lee - MP for Parramatta, Ms Julia Finn - MP for Granville, Ms Jenny Aitchison - Shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault for having visited us where we presented the need for a CALD women's shelter in Western Sydney, provided advice and support in order to make it a reality. We also like to express our appreciation to the Younes family of the Greenrock Pty Ltd for having offered one of their properties to be utilized for the IWSA Multicultural Women's Shelter. We also thank the Parramatta Leagues Club and the Younes family for providing financial assistance.

Older CALD Women key priorities in addressing the issue of abuse

I also need to say that IWSA's work with women who are vulnerable to isolation has put emphasis on CALD older women. This year, IWSA had been one of the organisations that has worked with the Older Women's Network (OWN) and WEL (Women's Electoral Lobby). Ms Mary O'Sullivan of OWN and Associate Professor Jane Mears (Deputy Chair of OWN NSW) supported IWSA both with the preparation and during the NSW Parliament Inquiry into Elder Abuse in New South Wales that was held on 22 February 2016.

There were three (3) major recommendations that IWSA put forward in OWN meetings, in our submission to the Inquiry. The three recommendations came out of the CALD women's consultation held on 17 February, 2016 in Harris Park. The following are the three recommendations:

1. Provide funding for:
 - Support programs that will employ specialist bilingual workers in the community sector, to address issues of abuse of and violence towards Older CALD women
 - The development and implementation of a state-wide community education campaign targeting CALD communities regarding issues of abuse of Older people across NSW.

- The establishment and running of a refuge/shelter for Older women of CALD background, in particular those who are escaping family and domestic violence
 - On-going training of service providers in cultural competency, use of interpreters, gender and other major issues concerning the well-being of Older CALD women and men. (Funding from state and federal level)
 - A fully resourced interpreting service for Older CALD people
 - Free English conversation classes for Older CALD people
1. Implement a collaborative and whole of government approach by both government and non-government service providers in their service delivery models to address the needs of Older CALD women
 2. Use a cross---sectional approach in bringing together government and non-government organisations to initiate the process of addressing the above recommendations

For the third recommendation, one has to consider the layers of cultural traditions that families from CALD background have to consider, in particular, the fear of disclosure and the consequences for the family's honour and reputation, family break-up, being alone and fear of moving to temporary crisis accommodation.

“Ageism” and employment of Older CALD women

At the IWSA's English Conversation sessions there have been reflections about the issue of “ageism” which is commonly experienced by all women who are past their 50s. The participants who are past their 50s, said that after they were made redundant, they had done education and training to acquire knowledge and skills that they thought could make them competitive in the job market. Most often they were not successful in their quest for another paid job. They think that their age has been a big consideration for employers who prefer young workers. After many years of unemployment, Older CALD women experience loss of financial stability that leads to dependency on their children who have income, and this leads to loss of self-esteem and social status.

Access points for Older CALD women in need of support

The IWSA's Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (IWRC) has a drop-in centre, which is also a community hub for CALD women of 18 years of age and above. The IWRC holds Community Skills Development activities that are pathways to connecting with the community, and to services leading to learning new skills, acquiring information and exploring possibilities in future income-generating activities. This year, we had seventy per cent of the participants who are in the Older CALD women bracket. This year, seventy per cent of the participants were in the Older CALD women bracket. The IWRC is also an effective access and soft point of entry for Older CALD women who are seeking assistance in ending abusive relationships and even in dealing with abusive people in their neighborhood.

Future prospects for our work with Older CALD women

Next year in March, IWSA will be 35 years old. In this context, we hope to have more robust advocacy work with the aim of better policy and programs for Older CALD women. We will build stronger collaborative partnerships with grassroots community organisations, government and non-government service agencies and legislators in bringing about the best outcomes for Older CALD women.

IWSA says “Thank you”

On behalf of the IWSA Management Committee I thank the staff for their hard work, commitment, dedication and resilience in the midst of the ever-changing climate in the community sector. I especially thank Jane Brock – IWSA Executive Officer for her leadership and high level of competence in establishing the Multicultural Women's Shelter.

My gratitude also goes to my co-members of the IWSA Management Committee for your support to me, the staff and to the whole organization during the year.

Thank you to the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) and the Law and Justice Foundation for their financial support to the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association. To all our partner organisations, volunteers and service recipients, I thank you for your contribution to our work with immigrant and refugee women.



Executive Officer's Report

Executive Officer: JANE BROCK

“Leave no one behind”

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and CALD Women-

The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA) endeavors to identify indicators on service recipients' outcomes that show how we have supported women in achieving their goals. This year there were several forums where we have had discussions with other organisations how to measure gender equality indicators. Participants realized the challenge for the not-for-profit sector is to make their governments become accountable in reporting what they had achieved on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs are the United Nations-led Global Goals that were adopted by World leaders in September 2015 at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, New York. There are 17 Global Goals and one of them is Goal 5 – Gender Equality.

The UN SDG Goal 5-Gender Equality and Rights of Marriage Migrants

In November 2015, IWSA participated in the Marriage Migrants Conference, which considered gender equality indicators. This Marriage Migrants Conference was held on 9 – 10 November 2015 in Manila, Philippines. The conference was organized by the AMMORE (Action Network on Marriage Migrants Rights and Empowerment) and the APMM (Asia-Pacific Mission for Migrants). At the core of the discussions were the following (1) the need to have development justice framework in measuring outcomes of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), (2) concrete accountability targets in government's SDG implementation and (3) the need for marriage migrants to organize and mobilize themselves in upholding marriage migrants rights and empowerment being one of the indicators for achieving SDG Goal 5.

IWSA Goals and what we had achieved

For the Immigrant Women's Resource Centre's (IWRC) Community Hub and Community Skills Development, this year IWSA collected data and surveys prescribed by FACS (Family and Community Services). The survey results showed a snapshot of what we achieved and not achieved in terms of the agreed level of outcomes for the service recipients. On the other hand, the Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service (HoMWISS), we reported on achieving the minimum case mix targets, level of contribution to workforce development and collaborative partnership.

IWSA internal process of measuring client outcomes – the context

The IWSA has internal processes in measuring what changed and did not change for individual service recipient, in particular those who are in ongoing case management due to domestic and family violence. The indicators of what changed are the goals set by the client with the project officers after the Initial Needs Assessment. There is a basic timetable for those who are accessing the Family Violence Provisions of the Australian Migration Regulations. The regulations set a standard number of days to

lodge documents that are vital to the making of decision with regards to partner visa holders and are presenting evidence of family violence they experienced from the hand of their visa sponsors. Most often this process determines the goal such as access to special benefit payment from Centrelink, entry into the social housing service and other forms of social services.

How to measure project outcomes so that we “leave no one behind”?

Measuring individual outcomes for service recipients is a must and knowing what data to measure an outcome should be agreed upon with the service recipients before an intervention is planned and implemented. This can set the standards for the SDGs perspective of “leaving no one behind”. Indeed, the world leaders in September 2015 promised to “leave no one behind” as their priority agenda in achieving the SDGs.

Structural transformation and reform, and IWSA’s work with marriage migrants

For women marriage migrants that come to IWSA for assistance the pressure of providing evidence of family violence is such a heavy load on their shoulders. In the midst of a marriage migrants’ efforts to recover from trauma and reclaiming self-esteem they are also documenting the horrors of family violence that they experienced. This documentation has to be done and submitted to the Department of Immigration to show they have genuinely experienced family violence. There is a need to review the process of providing evidence on marriage migrants’ experience of family violence to the Department of Immigration. The process of providing evidence must factor in reduced re-traumatisation. IWSA will work with the members of the NESB DV Network in making the process of evidence preparation more accessible.

IWSA advancing forward with the SDGs as vehicle for achieving support outcomes for marriage migrants

In view of the 35th IWSA foundation anniversary in March 2017, we are in the course of exploring SDGs as a way to deepen conversations with other not for profit CALD women specialist services and grassroots organisations. It is very important to have the Australian government SDGs target indicators be translated into its domestic version. IWSA wants to see the SDG target indicators put Gender Equality for CALD women as one of the Australian government’s priorities. On 8 October 2015, the Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) has hosted the National Women’s Alliances (NSW) forum on International Engagement. IWSA participated in this NWA forum. Participants in the forum had put forward an action, which is focused involving grassroots organisation in formulating plain language SDG target indicators. IWSA will work closely with NWA in particular the ERA in this undertaking.

In Gratitude

This year has been full of challenges and successes. Overcoming those challenges and attaining successes had been possible with the support from the Staff and the Management Committee. I thank them for their support and dedication with the leadership of Ms Vivi Germanos-Koutsounadis - IWSA Chairperson. I commend the extraordinary hard work and commitment of IWSA staff: Emina Kovac, Rukhshana Sarwar, Mariam James, Marichu Gloria, Summera Hafeez, Mohan Packianathan and Kawkab Jada. With this in mind, IWSA says thank you to our former staff Alexandra Tindick who moved to another field of work.

Thank you to our partners in the community sector:

IWSA Volunteers - Anthony Montebello, Chester Chiong, Christine Boutros, Diana Montgomery, Dolly Dube, Ellie Arti Noorzai, Elvira Cortez, Elsa Waldron, Ernel Joseph, Gerard Mirana, Hanish Banga, Junyu Pang, Kate Sammut, Manuel Rosario, Mary Rapunzel Alegria, Nadera Hakimi, Nadya Vahedi, Nedzad Trcic, Ninney Koshaba, Peter Geoffrey Brock, Rosalin Kuriype, Riri Karasawa, Rosario Navarro Cordova, Sarah Abdou, Shiela Bien, Sheila Osias, Shweta Gahlain, Stephanie Panovski, Valan Dawood and Zabibu Mbutu

For assistance to IWSA, thank you to FACS staff: Senior Project Officer -Toby Dobson, Senior Project Officer - Zeljka Josipovic, Western Sydney District Senior Managers - Peter Prants and Cathy Newman.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer: LINA CABAERO

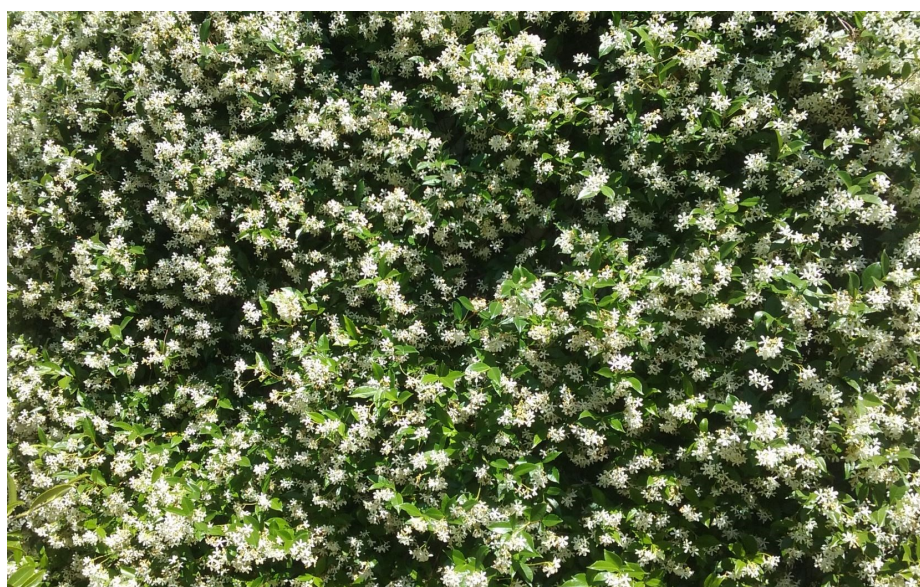
The Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA)'s financial standing is healthy in the context of its current level of income and expenditure and will have no problem paying its payables as and when they fall due. I present these short forms of Financial Reports for the year covering the period from 1 July 2015 until 30 June 2016.

The following points I wish to emphasise:

- The increased amount of funding is due to the additional money for Indexation – which approximately covers the increase in price of goods and services.
- The ERO (Equal Remuneration Order) is still being negotiated and IWSA hopes that we will receive the ERO soon
- One-off project: the Production of Community Education resource on Forced Marriage has been completed with success. The Project and Financial Audited reports have been lodged to the Law and Justice Foundation. I thank Jane Kenny - Law and Justice Foundation Grants and Information Manager, for her assistance.

IWSA continues to progress key aspects of its Operation Plan and one of which is the Establishment of the Multicultural Women's Shelter. On the occasion of the Annual General Meeting, IWSA holds the Launching of the IWSA Multicultural Women's Shelter. IWSA says thank you to the Younes Family (Ray, John and Joseph) with the Greenrock Property and the Parramatta Leagues Club for having provided financial support in the establishment of the MWS.

I wish to thank our Admin Officer, Emina Kovac for her diligence and expertise in monitoring the inflow and outflows of the IWSA finances, Mohan – IWSA accountant for his competence in ensuring that we are compliant with the statutory standards in financial accountability, to Sandra Grollmus – Auditor, staff members and most of all Jane Brock – IWSA Executive Officer who provided guidance in reaching the goals of IWSA for this financial year. I thank my co-members of the Management Committee for their support in fulfilling my responsibility as Treasurer.



Community Engagement

Immigrant Women's Speakout Association has placed great emphasis on engaging CALD women by working with IWSA members, volunteers and established CALD groups currently using IWSA resources. Working with refugee women's groups and associations, has established a wider networking to bring positive changes in the life of women from culturally and linguistically diverse background. Working with grassroots migrant and refugee women from different emerging ethnic groups and community organisations (NOOR Association, Afghan Women's Network, Philippines Australia Women's Association, Philippines Australia Community Services, Migrante Australia, Asian Women at Work, Indian, Iranian, and Sri Lankan women groups) is one of the outstanding achievements of IWSA this year.

Community building activities such as organising cultural events and excursions for the women with young children and the caring for young people were held as planned. On 24 April 2016 a women's picnic was organised by IWSA and more than 55 women attended and enjoyed a day out with other community women at Parramatta Lake Park. However having a session of the laughter yoga motivated the women to have more fun and entertainment during the day. The picnic ended with expression of their feedback and suggestions for more activities for future planning. The women were interviewed by the volunteer placement students doing research on identifying gaps in service delivery within the Specialist Homeless Services (SHS) service packages in Western Sydney.

Celebrating the cultural and international events such as Nawroze (1 April 2016 Granville Town Hall), Eid Alfetr (16 August 2015 Granville Youth and Community Recreation Centre, Eid Alhudah Women's International Day and Mother's Day (14 May 2016, Granville Town Hall) was organised by IWSA to celebrate multiculturalism and project immigrant and refugee women's voice in the mainstream Australian community.



Collaborative Partnership

Our collaborative partnership with community based organisations and staff of other service providers is going strong. Our partnership is rooted on mutual support and awareness to support clients. We have considered our willingness to work together towards an agreed purpose – to assist and support migrant and refugee women.

IWSA convenes the Non-English Speaking Domestic Violence (NESB DV) Network. This network used to meet bi-monthly and now meets quarterly to examine and act on issues related to CALD Domestic and Family Violence (DFV). The network provides resources to support effective case management for CALD women and children.

This year the NESB DV Network hosted and facilitated information sessions regarding the Men's Behaviour Change Program, which was presented by the Baptist Care Services. Also, the network members were able to participate in a discussion about the issues presented to Minister Marise Payne – "Issues on women who have no access to income". These include women who are on Bridging Visas and/or Temporary Partner Visas. The members were given the chance to give their issues and recommendations to be included in the submission. Members were also updated about the global campaign against Domestic and Family Violence through One Billion Rising, International Women's Day and Empty Shoes. The NESB DV Network's Empty Shoes project, which raises awareness of domestic homicide, was hosted at different events during White Ribbon Day and 16 Days of Activism on Violence Against Women. The installation is available for use at events by organisations and can be loaned from the IWSA.

The NESB DV Networks currently has representation from the following members: Barnardos, Cumberland Women's Health District, Liverpool Sexual Assault Services, Manly Community Centre, Migrant Resource Centres, Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association, Muslim Women's Association, NSW Police, Red Cross, Salvation Army, St Vincent De Paul, Western Sydney Local Health District, and Women and Girls Emergency Services, Women Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCASS), Asian Women at Work and the Forced Marriage Network.

IWSA also attended and worked with other networks and committees such as: Outer West Domestic Violence Network (OWDVN), MetWest Violence Prevention Network, Stop Domestic Violence Action Group (SDVAG), Holroyd Parramatta Domestic Violence Committee and other inter agency meetings to address the issues and concerns of migrant and refugee women in NSW

IWSA involvement in the Western Sydney District Homelessness Implementation Group (DHIG) and District Homelessness Operations Group (DHOG) is consistent and productive. The participation of the IWSA at these meetings is focused on advocating for actions on the needs of CALD women and clients, particularly around the issue of DFV as a primary driver of homelessness for this client group.

Community Skills Development

Women's English Conversation Class

One of the predominant activities in the Community Skills Development program is the English conversation class, which has been running for more than 10 years at IWSA's Immigrant Women's Resource Centre (IWRC). Throughout the year each session has 10-12 women from different backgrounds: Afghan, Iranian Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Indian and Turkish participated to learn and communicate with each other and build up a strong friendship and support one another. The English conversation class runs on Wednesdays from 10:00am – 12:00pm. It has helped the women to communicate easier to their GPs (medical doctors): fill up the basic forms and answer in English phone calls from services they are in contact with. The class is more informal and focuses on the areas of interest such as women's issues, health, culture and identity and cooking. The topics covered were mainly about how to say appropriate greetings, basic conversation using simple discussion styles on daily activities such as descriptions other countries, Australian geography, basic anatomy, what is the law?, consumer rights, discrimination: racial and gender, DV and the forced marriage in different communities in Australia. Participants also learn how to fill up the basic forms in travelling such as flight itinerary and other forms were used in the English Conversation class to improve their writing skills. Participants practiced writing correspondences and worked on several mocked up correspondence so that they can fully comprehend and take on skills that will provide them confidence in writing letters.

Cooking and recipes of the favourite food was another topic participants learned using the English language communication among the participants. Eid and other national and international occasions and festivals such as Eid al-feter, International Women's Day, Stop Violence Against Women, Refugee Crisis, Migration and Immigration were the most favourite topics this year.

These sessions also helped the women to increase their access to service providers, participation in social and cultural gatherings with more confidence. The followings are the feedback from the participants.

"I am very glad that now I can book my doctor's appointment. In the past I had to ask my daughter or son to do it for me. "

"English class has helped me make friends from my own community and other women from different nationalities."

"The English class has motivated me to learn computer skills and start writing English as well."

"The English class has improved my public speaking motivated me to express my opinion to the group rather to be quiet and passive."

"Now I am able to understand over 50% of the news and other interesting programs I watch on TV."

"The English class has helped me to gain more confidence and my self-esteem has developed as well."

Women's computer class

In order to assist the participants and respond to their needs, IWSA runs computer classes for CALD women at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels every Tuesdays. The basic computer skills, using internet searching engines, web-based emails, YouTube, social media, Microsoft Office package, digital photography were taught and demonstrated to the participants.

Some English Conversation class participants joined the computer classes. They are driven by their interest to learn more about computer and how to use it properly in communicating with families and friends overseas.

One of the participants' feedback expressed at the gathering held at the end of the term:

" Gaining computer skills increased my self-confidence in using the computer independently, empowered me to look for information in the internet and communicate with my friends and family using email and Facebook. "

"Learning how to efficiently use the email helped me to improve communications with customers in my small catering business"

" After I learned how to use Microsoft PowerPoint, I was able to create the presentation for an assignment at my TAFE course all by myself. The teacher said that my presentation was the best, even do I was the only person in the class whose first language was not English. "

Sewing Classes



The IWSA sewing class participants gained knowledge and skills in doing alterations. Some of the participants had set-up their own small business in clothing alterations that brings some income for them.

Mentoring and Leadership Training

IWSA has continued its effort in providing mentoring and leadership training to CALD women who came to our service as well as students in placement and other staff from other service providers. These women continued their participation to improve their knowledge and skills and to understand issues that they face. They learned how to navigate the NSW community service system, get job ready, understand their rights and responsibilities under certain circumstances (e.g. domestic and family violence) and were guided to understand benefits of a healthy relationship. They realised that strong and healthy relationship with others can help manage stress effectively. This enables a person to establish a solid foundation for an intimate relationship with a partner, ensuring that both people have a good sense of personal identity and self-esteem, and that both contribute to, and benefit from, the relationship in a balanced way. Through the mentoring sessions, women were empowered to make their own decisions and choices in their day-to-day life. Building self-esteem and confidence is at the foundation of IWSA's support to ensure lasting and future success for all mentees.

Our mentees this year were so enthusiastic and motivated in achieving the goals they set for themselves. Our mentors are very committed to providing a supportive atmosphere for the mentoring process to take place. The mentors took part in the learning process side-by-side with the mentees and made sure that mentees understood the skills and activities.

This year, IWSA also provided training in Domestic and Family Violence to non-SHS staff. They were designed to equip the volunteers to better understand Domestic and Family Violence and be able to assist victims of DVF in accessing services.



Direct Support for CALD Women Escaping Domestic and Family Violence: Homeless Multicultural Women Integrated Support Service (HoMWISS)

IWSA's HomWISS is now in its second year. Clients are provided with support and assistance through direct service in the form of case management and co-case management. Our skilled Project Officers are guided by essential components of case management: needs assessment, plan, act, and review. Our service is client-centred wherein the clients are involved in the decision-making. Our Project Officers focus on the strengths of our client rather than their deficits. Clients were encouraged to develop their skills. They were motivated to believe that they are the experts themselves. Our Project Officer's role is to help them develop and use their strengths to overcome their barriers to resolving trauma and prevent relapse.

IWSA also provided co-case management to other SHS providers. Co-case management is when more than one support worker provides casework support to the same client. Collaborative casework is best achieved if there is good communication, a clear case plan that each caseworker and service recipient has agreed to.

The past year has been another of the busiest years for the IWSA staff since it was reformed in 2014. IWSA has been working through a co-case management model implemented in 2014. Clients were referred by most of the SHS services and other Non SHS services. Referrals were made by different stages of services to clients who approached IWSA for support and assistance.

The HOMWISS project supported and assisted 266 CALD women and their children over this period. Over 80% of support periods delivered by IWSA were for clients who were homeless or at risk of being homeless due to domestic and family violence. Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) continues to be one of the main reasons for homelessness in Australia. The most disadvantaged people are the women and children: mainly those who are holding temporary spouse visas. These women are not entitled to many services due to the type of visas they are holding which are temporary ones.

For example, many of these women are not eligible to receive appropriate services and legal advice from Legal Aid due to their temporary visa status. However, our support and assistance to women and their children to live in a safe and healthy environment is our first priority. We have demonstrated this through co-case management in which IWSA has worked with other organisations, such as Parramatta Mission, Mission Australia, Bonnie Support Services, Community Support Services (a special program of the St Vincent de Paul Society), Trafficking and Slavery Safe House, Domestic Violence Service Management, Auburn Diversity Services, hospitals, and other funded organisations. There were those who provided accommodation and assisted clients who required specialist support with domestic and family violence issues.

IWSA project officers assisted and supported them to access different government services including the Department of Immigration, Centrelink and Health services, and to link them to those services providing accommodation such as Link2Home. IWSA has always focused on the following most important issues for women and children who are homeless due to Domestic and Family Violence:

- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Safe and healthy environment for women and their children
- Life skills and resilience training and mentoring
- Empowering women and their children for a better future

The HoMWISS project has an Action Plan for Prevention and Early Intervention through the community awareness programs around the issue of homelessness due to Domestic and Family Violence. Discussions also include the impact of domestic violence on women and their families. It is delivered through information sessions with the client groups at IWSA's office and also outside the office, for example, the information session at Bossley High School. Project officers have worked very hard to increase awareness on domestic and family violence, life skills and resilience training. Over 500 participants benefited from these training and information sessions from July 2015 to June 2016.

Participating in community development activities is another venue to target women affected by Domestic and Family Violence. IWSA organised an outing at the Lake Parramatta to discuss issues in the community and how IWSA can continue to help these women and their children. IWSA is also running therapeutic activities such as English conversations, sewing and computer classes to empower women and provide a soft pathways to access services.

IWSA has been active in developing and strengthening relationships with other service providers. IWSA has participated in relevant networks such as inter-agencies meetings, the Domestic Violence networks and committees, housing forums, DV conferences all over NSW, etc.

IWSA attended the 16 Days of Activism, Reclaim the Night and One Billion Rising to commemorate the number of women and children who have lost lives as a result of Domestic and Family Violence over the past years.

Awareness and Information Sessions on Domestic and Family Violence

Raising awareness about DV and the impact of DV on families, especially on young men and women is the first priority of IWSA Plan of Action. Running information sessions for women's groups, high school students and TAFE attendees were held in line with the IWSA strategy on DFV prevention.

IWSA project officers held a one-day information session at Bossley Park High School on December 2015. There were 130 people including the teachers and school staff that attended the session. The sessions ended with Question and Answer. Many attendees raised questions on DV and its impact on children.

On 19 November 2015 IWSA ran an information session about DV awareness, how to get help and access to services supporting victims of domestic violence. This event was held at TAFE Wetherill Park. More than 60 people attended and the occasion concluded with performance by the TAFE students. The theme of the performance is Domestic Violence.

In August 2015 an awareness-raising workshop on DV was held in the Dari language. IWSA organised this for the parents and teachers of the Shua Community Language School in Auburn.

Success Stories

Success Story

Celia* is a domestic and family violence survivor. She was referred to Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA) for support and assistance. She was homeless (with no permanent place to stay) due to domestic and family violence. Her permanent visa application was refused and was elevated to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a merits review.

IWSA provided her with information about domestic and family violence and the review process with the Tribunal. She was advised to continue her counselling to ensure her health was a priority. Hence, she could not afford the on-going fee of her psychologist; she was referred to a mental health counsellor and provided with a mental health plan.

Celia worked with her Project Officer to develop an ongoing case management plan. Her needs were identified and she was provided with assistance and support, including her immigration issue. Celia also received mentoring with IWSA in self-care and design of safety, understanding the merits review process in the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, getting "job ready", as well as tenancy rights and access to rental accommodation.

While Celia was undergoing therapeutic counselling and mentoring sessions, IWSA assisted her to connect with her community for support. This is part of IWSA's initiative to link up services and work creatively with vulnerable and homeless women. She started socialising with her community. She also participated in IWSA's activities and met other women from different backgrounds. She became self-confident and finally regained her self-esteem. Initially, she found a paid job as a cleaner. She was encouraged to establish her own small business. IWSA assisted her in applying for her own ABN number and to set up her own cleaning business.

Celia is now living in a self-contained granny flat in Eastern Sydney. She exited from the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association's mentoring program in October 2015. During the exit interview, she expressed her appreciation and gratitude with the services provided by IWSA.

*name changed

Taking Action is the Foundational Key to Success

Poorandukht is a 37 year old woman from Iran. She is a well-educated woman with a master degree in civil engineering. She spent almost a year getting to know her husband before marrying him and migrating to Australia. Their marriage was going well at the beginning while they were living in Iran.

Poorandukht came to Australia on temporary spouse visa 309 and lived with her husband and his father-in-law in Melbourne, Victoria. She desired to be settled into her new life in a new country and to have a happy family and children. Unfortunately, she soon found that her husband was an alcoholic and was prone to shouting, yelling at her, calling her names and rude words. Her husband was very violent. He slapped her on the face and committed all forms of physical violence when he was drunk and this happened very often. Her husband's violence worsened each night that followed. She was pushed and shoved. She was forced to stay awake until 3 or 4 in the morning to serve him food while he was drinking alcohol.

However, it came to a point that she could not stand and so she decided to move out of this violent relationship. At first she did not know where to go for support. She went to the police and asked for help and then she moved to Sydney. The social worker from Centrelink referred her Immigrant Women's Speakout Association (IWSA), for more support.

In 2015, after an Initial Assessment process, the IWSA project officer negotiated with Poorandukht, the client, that they map out her case management plan in order to address her needs. Safety and accommodation were her first priority. Poorandukht has neither family nor friends in Sydney. The IWSA project officer made a referral for her to Link2Home to access temporary and shared accommodation. Later on, the IWSA Project Officer assisted her to look for private rental. To undertake this process, the IWSA Project Officer linked her to the group leader from a community organisation. This group leader introduced Poorandukht to a real estate agent. The Community group leader negotiated with the real estate agent for affordable rent. She moved into her own house with the assistance of the community group. Since then, Poorandukht has been living with no fear of violence or humiliation.

As agreed with the client, as written in her case plan, she was mentored by the IWSA project officer regarding Self-Care and Safety Planning, Life Skills and Resilience Capabilities. She attended individual/and group information sessions on the above topics regularly at IWSA. She became empowered, and was able to rebuild her confidence and self-esteem. She was assisted to apply for her permanent residency under the Family Violence Provisions of the Australian Migration Regulations. Later, IWSA assisted her to access Centrelink special benefit while she was looking for a job.

With her experience, Poorandukht wants to tell every woman who is in similar situation that "there is no point to continue in a relationship which leads you to suffer each day, losing your self-confidence and freezing your potential capabilities. It is best to seek help as soon as possible". Poorandukht found a full-time job in the area of civil engineering where she is currently working. Today, Poorandukht is an independent, happy and self-reliant woman, and looks to the future with hope and success, living in a safe and respectful relationship.

Poorandukht has written on the IWSA Feedback Form: "However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at."

Radio Plays on Forced Marriage

(Resource for Multi-Language Community Education)

Women's Kitchen Table Conversations on Forced marriage

IWSA has developed the radio plays on Forced Marriage in eight community languages funded by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW. The aim of this project is to raise awareness about Forced Marriage, which is currently practiced in some communities in the Australian society. It educates the listeners about the impact of Forced and Servile Marriage on women, and the possible legal prosecution of those who commits this crime.

Before finalising the project concept there were 15 people from different communities that were invited for consultation on Forced Marriage and its practice in Australia. After the production of the Forced Marriage Radio Plays, IWSA held evaluation and feedback session on the radio plays that were developed in Dari and Persian languages. A Kitchen Table Conversation was held with Afghan and Iranian women. They listened to the CD and afterwards expressed their views on the key messages of the radio plays. The session facilitated by IWSA project officer with two placement students from university and TAFE. The conversations started with a power point presentation on wedding traditions in different countries and cultures.

The brainstorm started with the question "How did you marry your husband?" Each participant had shared very interesting and enlightening stories. The session later was followed by a discussion on the differentiation between the Arranged Marriage and Forced Marriage. The discussion points were noted down and the participants' feedback. At the conclusion of the Feedback session the participants said the Forced Marriage Radio Plays are highly valuable education material and very useful as discussion starters for the community.

Participants' major feedback points on Forced Marriage Radio Plays on Audio CD:

"Both plays are well recorded and the conversation between mum and daughter is very clear, and was voiced naturally."

"It should be played continuously on community radios and especially on SBS radio."

"Distribution of the Forced Marriage Radio Plays on Audio CDs should take place in women's gathering during the excursions or festivals for increased awareness on the effects of forced marriage."

"It should be played in the men's group because most often fathers are the ones who decide for their daughters whom to marry with."

Key Messages on Forced Marriage Through Facebook

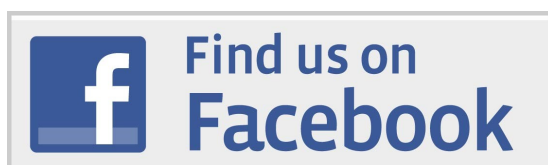
The Radio Plays on Force Marriage that were recorded on Audio CD had been posted on Facebook pages of TAFE students who were in placement at the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association. One of the students – Ellie Arti Noorzai had written a snapshot of the feedback by her FB friends on the messages on Forced Marriage. The summary of the feedback is as follows:

- Forced Marriage happens in closed doors
- Forced Marriage is usually a situation where a young girl is forced to marry an older man
- High schools teachers and management must be trained in dealing with a situation when a student is being forced into marriage
- High school officials must be given special authority to act immediately when a student reports that she/he is being forced to marry
- Child marriage exists in Australia and is very secretive, and happens in the same communities that practice FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)
- Information about Forced Marriage on the Facebook Page needs to include information on how young people can escape and report Forced and Underage marriage
- Add government legislation to Forced Marriage information so people who are engaging in such criminal behaviour are aware of laws they are breaking and how they will be prosecuted

IWSA continues to run the information dissemination on Forced Marriage by using the different social media platforms. We have the Speakout Radio and the link is found on our IWSA website or one can search using this direct link: <https://speakoutradio.wordpress.com/mp3s/>

IWSA is in gratitude to the following TAFE students in placement for their creativity, high knowledge and skills in using the social media and for their hard work and courage in running this project: Ellie Arti Noorzai, Christine Boutros, Han-nish Banga, Zabibu Mbuto and Shweta Gahlain.

Follow us on:



@IWSAwomen

SpeakOut's Prominent Women

From year, the Immigrant Women's Speakout started to include on its Annual General Meeting report the publication of a list of Speakout Prominent Women. This year we publish the recent Edna Ryan awardees and also included another Speakout prominent woman who was also an Edna Ryan awardee in 2006.



Jozefa Sobski

Jozefa Sobski, Edna Ryan Education Award – for pioneering elimination of sex discrimination in the national education system

Throughout her professional and voluntary career Jozefa Sobski has vigorously and effectively pioneered the elimination of sex discrimination in the national education system, and led feminist campaigns in education and social policy. Brought up in a migrant hostel, Jozefa has been a teacher, non sexist education adviser to the NSW Ministers, TAFE Director, and Deputy Director-General of NSW Education. She used these three positions, and her membership of many voluntary organisations, to promote programs to achieve equal education outcomes for girls and women, and create opportunities for marginalised communities through education. Since retirement Jozefa has campaigned against TAFE privatisation and the reduction of women's courses. Under Jozefa's leadership the Jessie Street National Women's Library became a significant research centre. As convenor of the Women's Electoral Lobby – NSW, Jozefa was instrumental in the campaign to save women's refuges.



Lina Cabaero

Lina Cabaero, Edna Ryan Workforce Award - for improving conditions for women workers

Lina has worked tirelessly to improve the conditions of textile, clothing and footwear outworkers, most of whom are women. In 2012 she facilitated and co-ordinated outworkers in a campaign for the NSW Fair Work Amendment (Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industries) Bill 2011. This campaign included two demonstrations in the courtyard of Parliament House in Sydney. The outworkers, in their traditional dresses and high heel shoes, spoke about their situation and their demand for an equitable pay rate. Lina brought creativity to the demonstration by leading them in song with 'Labour Not The Label'. These demonstrations led to meaningful dialogue between politicians and outworkers. The Bill was passed, ensuring that outworkers were recognised as employees, rather than independent contractors. This made it possible for them to claim wages from fashion houses if their 'bosses' disappeared. Lina Cabaero's impressive organisational skills have improved the working conditions for many women.



Jane Brock

Jane Brock, Edna Ryan Community Activism Award – Jane's work is a testimony to the commitment of women to support each other

Since migrating to Australia in 1996, Jane as volunteer with Migrante-Australia, a community-based Filipino organization spent many weeks educating the community to support the campaign for justice for Cornelia Rau and Vivian Solon Alvarez, and with other organisations involved in the successful action led to Vivian Solon Alvarez being found. Also, as volunteer for Migrante Australia she has trained many women in life skills, computer literacy, and shown them how to get information about government services, as well as raising their awareness on domestic violence, and equity and access issues. In both her paid work [Executive Officer of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association] and volunteer capacity [Migrante-Australia, Philippines-Australia Women's Association and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)], Jane's work is a testimony to the commitment of women to support each other."

This year IWSA salutes Edna Ryan from which the award took its name. Edna Ryan is a workplace rights advocate in the 1970s. She is an active member of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL). Together with WEL, Edna and other young women campaigned for the minimum wage, which became known as National Wage Case in 1974. Edna was tireless that even during her retirement years she continued her activism on the rights of women workers with passion.

(The description on achievements is the citation as printed in the award document)

IWSA Management Committee and Staff 2015-2016

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

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Anjana Regmi	Vice Chairperson
Safa Rahimi	Secretary
Tabitha D. Ponnambalam	Deputy Secretary
Lina Cabaero	Treasurer
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Jane Brock	Executive Officer
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Rukhshana Sarwar	Project Officer
Mohan Packianathan	Accountant
Emina Kovac	Admin Officer
Summera Hafeez	Sewing Class Teacher
Kawkab Jada	Caretaker

VOLUNTEERS

We thank our students in placement and volunteers for the priceless contribution to SpeakOut:

Anthony Montebello, Chester Chiong, Christine Boutros, Diana Montgomery, Dolly Dube, Ellie Arti Noorzai, Elvira Cortez, Elsa Waldron, Erel Joseph, Gerard Mirana, Hanish Banga, Junyu Pang, Kate Sammut, Manuel Rosario, Mary Rapunzel Alegria, Nadera Hakimi, Nadya Vahedi, Nedzad Trcic, Ninney Koshaba, Peter Geoffrey Brock, Rosalin Kuriype, Riri Karasawa, Rosario Navarro Cordova, Sarah Abdou, Shiela Bien, Sheila Osias, Shweta Gahlain, Stephanie Panovski, Valan Dawood and Zabibu Mbuto





2016 – 2017 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name/Organisation:	
Contact Person:	
Address:	
Telephone: (H)..... (W)..... (M).....	
Fax:	Email:
Language/s Spoken:	
Enclosed is a cheque/money order for \$..... being payment of membership.	

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Individual membership (unwaged):	Free
Individual membership (waged):	
o Annual Income less than \$35 000pa	\$11(incl GST)
o Annual Income \$35 000pa – \$50 000pa	\$16.50 (incl GST)
o Annual Income more than \$50 000pa	\$27.50 (incl GST)

ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

o Unfunded Organisations	Free	
o Funded Organisations	\$22 (incl GST)	
o Reciprocal Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Your Organisation is (please tick all applicable):		
Ethno-specific Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multi-ethnic Organisation <input type="checkbox"/>
Women's Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Domestic Violence Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>

Membership payment should be made from 1st July 2016.

DONATION

Amount:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

I agree to abide by the aims and objectives of Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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